



ESSEX COUNTY COLLEGE

MANIFESTO AND 10-POINT PROGRAM

8 JANUARY, 1970



THE NECESSITY FOR CHANGE

Life in America is a bitch. If you are black or brown it's always been a bitch since American History has been written with the blood of people of color. If you're white, young, and born of working parents, America has also always been a bitch since this country was built on and maintains itself through the oppression of the working class by the rich cats who control.

We all go to school from kindergarten on up to learn that America is the best place ever, that our own feelings don't count for anything, and that we should respect authority from Presidents to cops regardless of how jive they are. Most of us grew up during the 1960's and began realizing that the only thing of importance in this country was money earned by any means necessary, that all the rhetoric about freedom and democracy here and around the world was a bunch of lies used to hide the activities of those cats who wanted to use us to get even richer. So the Man creates racism to divide black and white people. He tries to send many of us to 'Nam to help make the world safe for his business investments. As the leaders of corporations keep getting richer our dollars buy fewer and fewer eggs. They give us just enough schooling to fuck up our minds and "make us safe for America", and then they offer us their "skilled" jobs to keep the corporations producing their plastic products.

From the time we are born we are forced and programmed to do things we don't want to do in the name of "what's best for us" or "national security" or some other stupid phrase. We get hustled by parents, cops, teachers, and adults in general whenever we do our own things. We go to school not because we dig it or because we can groove on ourselves and each other, but rather because they've erected a series of bullshit physical and psychological

penalties to keep us in line. They use all sorts of devices to make us feel guilty whenever we feel that school and the other things they force us to do are bullshit, suggesting that its our own personal hang-up rather than the system which is at fault.

And so it is with Essex County College. It was set up by and is run for the business community. The initial report asking the state to set up the college says, "This Commission carefully studied the need of industry in Essex County and we are convinced that a resevoir of skilled technicians is necessary if new industry is to be attracted and present industry held within the county". What bullshit! The business community is not the same as the people's community. What is good for business is not necessarily good for people. The rulers of Essex obviously ignore the needs of students, faculty, staff, and the community becuase these needs don't fit their purposes.

It is no accident that the business division is the largest in the college and that the President of the Board of Trustees is also the president of one of New Jersey's largest banks. It is no accident that politically active faculty are being fired. It is no accident that the construction of the real Newark campus has been delayed, and that the decision to move to Verona was made without consulting students, faculty, staff, or the community. We all suffer under bullshit regulations and requirements, and procedures are set up which cannot deal with people's individual needs. Hundreds of us who have been here for two years will not graduate because of those requirements and jive advice from 'advisors', and that procedures are set up which cannot deal with people's individual needs. It is no accident that satisfactory work at Essex does not guarantee transfer to a 4-year school. It is no accident that wages and working conditions for the non-faculty staff

are horrendous and that all attempts to start an employees organization have been thwarted by the administration. Whatever is good about Essex has been created by students and that portion of the faculty which is particularly concerned and interested in us and the problems we all face together.

The People's Council of Essex County College is forming to deal with these and other problems. The Council will meet regularly. We will establish a grievance program which will operate daily to help individuals who get fucked over by the college.

We will establish our own newspaper. We will change Essex County College when all of us who study and work here can get our shit together, join the Council, and participate in the struggle ahead.

Power to the People!!

I

WE DEMAND THAT THE MOVE TO VERONA BE CANCELLED AND THAT WHATEVER NEW FACILITIES ARE NECESSARY BE LOCATED IN NEWARK IN ORDER TO MAINTAIN OPEN ADMISSIONS.

Moving to Verona would take resources away from Newark and delay further the construction of the new campus. It would create a stimulus for suburban applications to the college and therefore continue the proportionate decline in the urban population at the college. It would make impossible any real community - oriented programming. Conditions at the college are already impossible; a second campus, 10 miles away, would make the problems staggering. Transportation to and from Verona would be a hardship on Newark area students. It should be remembered that the community was originally promised that no suburban annex would be considered until the new campus in Newark was completed. And ground hasn't even been broken on this new campus! The community fought for over two years to get the school located in Newark, and the administration has effectively kept the community, the students, the staff, and the faculty from participating in this decision. We feel that in this time of racial and class polarization that whites and blacks, urban and suburban meet together in Newark rather than in some isolated retreat in the middle of nowhere. The projected enrollment figures are inaccurate just as the figures projected for this year were way too high; this exaggeration is due to the desire of the board to get more money appropriated to the college. Facilities can be found in Newark to handle whatever increase in enrollment will occur.

On the other side of the coin is the question of the suburban patients at the proposed Verona annex. Many of them will be removed to accommodate the college with no comparable facilities available to them.

Additionally, there is considerable speculation that the sanitorium will present a health hazzard to people previously unexposed to TB.

II

STUDENTS AND FACULTY (ACTING AS GROUPS AND/OR THROUGH INDIVIDUALS THEY ELECT) MUST HAVE ALL THE DECISION-MAKING POWER IN FIRING, RE-HIRING, AND HIRING TEACHERS, TO INSURE THAT GOOD TEACHING IS REWARDED AND POOR TEACHING IS ELIMINATED.

Ray Proctor, Alan Block, and other teachers without Masters Degrees are being fired. This policy cannot be allowed; just because a teacher does not have a M.A. or M.S. does not mean he can't teach well. Are we interested in good teachers or in a faculty with lots of letters after their names? We as students know of teachers who have Masters Degrees, but who cannot put life into their courses and do not reach their students. Yet most of these people will be re-hired. Either the administrators are not really interested in good teaching or they are not capable of evaluating it.

Should we try to change just this one policy? Suppose we could get the administration to stop using a Masters Degree as a condition for re-hiring? We would still have the administrators firing or re-hiring teachers. Their judgment in making the decisions this year has been inadequate and incompetent. Why should we believe it will be or could be any better in the future? How can administrators know which classes have been interesting and have created a learning process? Administrators only learn through second-hand information. This information is received from an occasional student or a teacher who evaluates another teacher's class once in a while. Most of the time, administrators do not know what or how a teacher is teaching. They are in no position to judge. And in the case of the above

mentioned faculty good evaluations have been overruled. Both Proctor and Block have full class evaluations from their previous students. These evaluations overwhelmingly support their competence.

III

WE DEMAND THAT ANYONE WHO HAS RECEIVED (60) CREDITS BY THE END OF THE WINTER SEMESTER BE ALLOWED TO GRADUATE AT HIS OWN DISCRETION.

Many students have been advised inaccurately since the college began in September of 1968. Many faculty members will readily admit that they did not fully understand the procedures and requirements involved when they were advising students. Also it is essential to recognize that certain curriculum requirements have substantially changed over the past 14 years. As a result many students find that they do not have the correct course credits for graduation.

Because of ill-advisement and the absence of catalogue offered courses over 500 students are being denied the graduation certificate. It is absolutely essential that these students be permitted to graduate. This error is not their fault. The policy that demands certain exact courses in specific numbers has been proven to be detrimental to the student. Selection of courses should be purely voluntary. The acquisition of the minimum number of required credits in any given division should be the only requirement for graduation.

IV

WE DEMAND THAT THE COLLEGE MAKE AVAILABLE IMMEDIATELY \$50,000 FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A DAY CARE CENTER FOR STUDENTS AND STAFF.

There is an urgent need for a Day Care Center for students with children. Many students find they have no adequate place to leave their children

during the five or six hours they spend at school. Many must rush to class and rush home without stopping in the library, consulting a teacher or counselor, or participating in other important school business. This college should and must feel an obligation to these students. A nursery must be provided to ease their burden and thus enable them to obtain an education.

They cannot afford the fees most nurseries charge since these nurseries are mostly for working women who have money coming in. The center would also provide an educational experience for child psychology and early childhood education majors who could work in the center.

A woman who wants an education should not be denied it because she has children. The center will be operated on a priority basis. Students will receive first priority, staff the second and faculty the third.

V

WE DEMAND THAT THE COLLEGE EXPAND ITS URBAN-ORIENTED PROGRAMS.

Essex County College has failed by almost every standard of judgement to extend itself into the urban community. Recognizing this, it becomes necessary that some of the money wasted on jive ass, "professional" consultants be used to hire real consultants from the community who are acquainted with community problems on a firsthand basis. This money should be channelled through an expanded Urban Institutional Training Program. Further, a recruitment department, separate and independent from the administration, complete with director and staff must be established, with the inner city non-white community as its immediate target. As of now, only 30-40% of the student body resides in Newark. A college-community program which incorporates decision-making from the community will make more possible programs which respond to community needs.

WE DEMAND THAT ESSEX MOVE IMMEDIATELY TO BECOME A FOUR-YEAR COLLEGE

Essex was set up originally as a two-year school because the business men wanted a place to train low-level administrators and technicians. They never expected the overwhelming majority of people going to Essex to want a four-year education. In fact President Ellis White has been saying for a long time how wonderful it is that Essex can provide an education for those who cannot make it at a four-year college.

If Essex became a four-year school nobody would be hassled about transferring since most of us would get our BA here. Much of the bullshit at Essex is because the college has to conform to the requirements of four-year colleges. Experimentation can only happen if we go four-year. There is no reason why Essex couldn't remain an open-admission college, capable of granting two-year degrees and four-year degrees. During the past 15 years two junior colleges in New Jersey have already become four-year colleges so there is no legal roadblock. Keeping Essex a two-year college benefits only the rulers since they can weed a lot of us out here and not have to provide us with a four-year education.

VIa

WE DEMAND ADEQUATE FULL COUNSELING STAFF SOLELY DEVOTED TO TRANSFER PROBLEMS.
WE DEMAND A GUARANTEED TRANSFER WITHOUT LOSS OF CREDIT FOR ALL STUDENTS WHO SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETE THEIR WORK OF ECC.

At ECC we all share many pressing problems-but the one which has concerned us since we sent in our application is where do we go from here. None of the four year New Jersey Colleges consider themselves obligated to admit community college graduates. And our own school has not created a curriculum which gives us a real chance to transfer to a four year college. After two

years we're left with an A.A. or AAS degree which barely upgrades our job prospects. The Administration must face its responsibility in this situation. They must offer a curriculum which compliments that of four year schools so that ECC students do not lose a portion of their credits when they transfer. A four-year college education is a Right and not a Privilege.

VII

WE DEMAND THE RESIGNATION OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A NEW BOARD OF 5 STUDENTS, 3 FACULTY, 2 STAFF AND 2 MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY ELECTED BY STUDENTS, FACULTY AND STAFF ON A ONE-VOTE BASIS. WE ALSO DEMAND THE NEW BOARD CONVENE OPEN HEARINGS TO RESTRUCTURE DECISION-MAKING AT THE COLLEGE.

All over America small groups of people are making decisions for masses of other people. Essex College is no exception. If you are a student, administrators and faculty make decisions for you they don't have to abide by. If you are a faculty member, the administration is messing you up at every turn. And if you are a non-professional employee, well, you know where you're at. The problem is that from the top on down, people are selected for you rather than elected by you. We affirm the right of self-determination for all situations. Where-ever it is practical, open decision-making structures should be instituted to involve people who are to be directly affected, on a one-man, one-vote basis. Whenever it is necessary to have representatives, at the very least they should be elected directly by and from those whom they represent. The Board of Trustees is illegitimate since it was never elected by those over whom it rules and since the members are not like those of us who study and work at the college.

VIII

WE DEMAND THE IMMEDIATE RESIGNATION OF PRESIDENT ELLIS WHITE, AND VICE-PRESIDENT J. HARRY SMITH. WE DEMAND THE CREATION OF AN ELECTED STUDENT-FACULTY GRIEVANCE COMMITTEE TO OVERSEE THE HIRING AND FIRING PENDING THE CREATION OF NEW DECISION-MAKING STRUCTURES.

Ellis White has proved himself totally unfit to be President of this or any other college. He has done nothing to improve it or raise additional money for it. He seems content to mouth off about his bullshit "systems approach", how we are doing such a "bang-up" job for the "educationally deprived", and how we have been operating under "crisis-management". This man is the master of the trite cliché and should be retired. His understudy, J. Harry Smith, is an extremely upwardly mobile man whose slippery tongue and growing power is a good model for the MAN himself. J. Harry has been too busy heading up the Urban League, the Essex County Poverty Program, the East Orange Draft Board, his own Richard Nixon Fan Club, and god knows what else to see to it that the problems at Essex are cared for. Both these men are of the old school and cannot lead a college whose students and employees are demanding change.

The faculty has already drawn up a "Statement of Accountability" directed to the President. They note his complete responsibility for the deterioration of the school facilities and programs. This includes the maintenance section the registration office, the importance of the Academic Council and the increased low moral of the faculty.

During the student strike in the winter semester of 1969 the students won from the administration the demand to create the administrative position of "Vice-President". The position was to be filled by a non-white, not to be selected from the then current administration. This agreement was completely violated with the placement of J. Harry Smith as Vice-President.

IX

WE DEMAND THE CREATION OF AN ELECTED STUDENT-FACULTY REVIEW PANEL TO RE-EVALUATE ALL COURSES, SCHEDULING, PROCEDURES, REQUIREMENTS AND THE GRADING SYSTEM.

All our lives we have been placed in situations over which we have little say and no control. If the educational system we have suffered for 12 years shows this clearly, Essex County College shows this at its worst. Programs have been set up and courses scheduled with no say on our part. And what is the result? Much of our time is wasted just like much of the 14,000 hours we spent in elementary and high schools was wasted. Programs are prepared to serve the interests of the business "community" rather than the needs of students. Or courses are taught which don't relate to the world we live in, because they don't relate directly to the structured problems facing us in society, their causes, or how we can fundamentally change them. Course requirements are set up which give us little choice except to take such programs or courses. And all of this is dominated by a grading system designed to control, channel or eliminate us, a system to make us well-trained and compliant rather than to aid in our learning and growth.

X

WE DEMAND THAT THE ADMINISTRATION MAKE KNOWN IMMEDIATELY THAT IT WELCOMES THE NON-FACULTY EMPLOYEES STARTING THEIR OWN UNION AND THAT IT WILL NOT ATTEMPT TO BLOCK SUCH AN ORGANIZATION.

Many of the non-faculty employees work under miserable conditions. Non-faculty salaries begin at slightly more than 3,000 per year while the President makes more than \$30,000 and the Vice-President more than 22,000. In addition employees are subject to arbitrary decisions by immediate supervisors and administrators in terms of work conditions as well as hiring and firing. Employees such as elevator operators have no guarantee of continued employment once the college moves to quarters which won't require them. In typical fashion the administration has disregarded the attempt of people to improve their own lives through collective bargaining by organizing a union. The administration must immediately stop interfering with their efforts to organizing.